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SUBJECT: IRAQ: DE MARTINO PREVIEWS LESSONS LEARNED
CONFERENCE

¶1. Summary. Amb. Gianludovico De Martino, Italian MFA Iraq Task Force Director, told poloff that the Italian proposal for a lessons learned conference would focus on three topics: successful transition of security responsibility to Iraqi authorities, increased focus on PRTs as a tool in distributing and monitoring assistance, and an increased linkage between the Iraq Compact and PRTs. The conference, tentatively scheduled for mid-May in Italy, would include the participation of representatives of governments (including the Iraqi Government), international organizations and civil society organizations with in-country experience. End Summary.

¶2. On April 5, De Martino outlined for poloff his plan for an Iraq lessons learned conference in Italy tentatively scheduled for mid-May. De Martino hoped to encourage attendance by all coalition partner nations, significant Iraq Compact nations, international organizations, and civil society organizations with in-country experience in Iraq. The first objective of the conference would be to focus on the successful transition of security responsibilities to Iraqi authorities focusing on the Italian experience in Nassyriah and the UK experience in southern Iraq - i.e. not concentrating on pacifying Iraq, but rather, focusing on increasing Iraqi institutional capability to deal with persistent security threats. The first part of the security discussion will include only government officials from coalition partner nations. The second part of the security discussion would also involve Iraqi government officials.

¶3. The second objective of the conference would be to encourage greater use of PRTs by international donor organizations. De Martino noted that many international organizations, including the UNDP and EC, could benefit greatly by embedding teams or officials in the PRTs to take advantage of the existing networks, experience and infrastructure. In many parts of the country, PRTs represented the only international presence. Additionally, PRTs already understand the economic, infrastructure and humanitarian requirements of the provincial governments and have experience monitoring assistance funds.

¶4. The final objective of the conference would focus on making efficient use of the Iraq Compact. De Martino hinted that he might want to lead a discussion about the possibility of linking the on-the-ground experience of the PRTs to the Iraqi Compact funding framework. This part of the conference would depend on developments in launching the Iraq Compact.

15. De Martino stated that an agenda and proposal for participants would be distributed next week, but welcomed any recommendations for civil society participants and agenda points.
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